

The New Abortion Laws: Protecting Unborn Children Lives , Act against Women Rights or Endangering Women?

For millennia, women have been told what to do, how to dress, what they cannot do, what they can do and so many other things. Women have been regarded as secondary to men in many different cultures and countries around the world. Sadly, women are still oppressed in some countries today. The oppression in each country more varying in their intensity.

Presently, women are being more empowered and given more freedom of choice. There have been movements of women empowerment and their freedom to do what they want, when they want and how they want. Some events occurred that have dampened the progressive movements.

Earlier this year, there was a wave of abortion laws that tore through the U.S. Around May, restrictive abortion laws were signed that made it difficult to receive abortion services in an attempt to protect unborn children and overturn *Roe v. Wade*. The Fetal Heartbeat Abortion law was signed in Georgia. The law bans abortion after six weeks of pregnancy. It takes the same amount of time for doctors to detect a fetal heartbeat. Louisiana, Ohio and Mississippi have placed the same law. Missouri's law bans abortion starting at eight weeks. In Alabama, abortion is a felony unless there are health risks or the baby's survival is at risk. None of these abortion laws carry an exception for rape or incest victims.

Many conversations and questions about what could happen with the new abortion laws circulated. Some people looked to pre-*Roe v. Wade* times. NPR's Mary Louise Kelly had a conversation with Tulane University's assistant history professor, Karissa Haugeberg about life

before *Roe v. Wade*. Haugeberg said, “Immediately before *Roe v. Wade*, officially approximately 200 women died per year. Historically, the most commonplace method that women have used when they haven't been able to obtain legal abortions is self-induction. Those are the horror stories that you hear of women trying to fall down stairs or ingesting poisons or using instruments to try to induce an abortion.”

Haugeberg also stated women would go to the “unregulated market”. There were doctors that still provided the services. They would have what Haugeberg called the “...word-of-mouth network that enabled many women to find safe providers”. Even though abortion was illegal before *Roe v. Wade*, women still found ways to get an abortion and doctors found ways to provide them. There were an estimated 20% - 25% of pregnancies that ended in abortion. The new abortion laws will not prevent future abortions from happening. They will only make women and practitioners look for other ways to do it, whether self-induced or going to a black market. These methods are highly risky and deadly to the mother. Instead of one life ending, two will. Abortion is a safe way to end pregnancy without endangering the woman’s life.

There have been concerns of women’s rights and the abortion laws passed. Especially with the laws being passed mainly by white men. Many feel that men should not have a say in what women do with their bodies nor have a say in what they decide to do in any aspect. With the abortion laws being created and signed by men, it brings back the issue that has been going on for millennia. Women being told what to do, when to do it and have no say in anything. The laws passed removed women’s freedom of choice of deciding what to do with their lives and their bodies.

Many women and celebrities spoke out against the laws. Reese Witherspoon tweeted, “I’m beyond upset about the passing of new abortion bans in Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi,

Georgia, and Ohio. This is Unconstitutional and Abhorrent. We can not tolerate this attack on women's fundamental rights." Rihanna went on Twitter to point out the white men that made the decisions about the laws in Alabama. She tweeted, "Take a look. these are the idiots making decisions for WOMEN in America. Governor Kay Ivey...SHAME ON YOU!!!!" She attached a photo of all 25 Alabama senators that voted on the bill.

The new abortion laws passed has caused issues and concerns. They were passed in an attempt to overthrow *Roe v. Wade* and get abortion abolished. These laws have consequences that seemed to have been unforeseen. Based on history, unsafe methods of abortion will be sought after. These include self-induced or black market abortions. There might be a chance that there will be some safe methods with practices that are under-the-radar, but even those can be risky. Both the woman and fetus will be in jeopardy instead of just one life. Haugeberg stated about 20% - 25% of abortions occurred before *Roe v. Wade*. What makes the senators who passed these laws think abortion will stop. It will continue to take place. Women's rights are questioned and are in jeopardy. Allowing these laws to pass, restricts a woman's decision of what she can do with her body. Any woman should be able to make decision about her well-being and body without the interference of men.